



Professor R.L. Singh
(1917-2001)

Professor R.L. Singh was born on March 20, 1917, at Bahiri, a village near Varanasi. He was a purposeful, intellectually fruitful, socially responsible and professionally exceptional life. Having graduated from St. John's College, Agra, he received his Masters Degree from

University of Calcutta. His research and early training under the able guidance of Professor L. Dudley Stamp at the London School of Economics proved to be a great asset. His Ph.D. work on 'Banaras and its Umland' gave a new direction to research in Urban Geography.

Among the many outstanding contributions of Prof. Singh in various walks of life, mention may be made of his putting the Department of Geography as well as the National Geographical Society of India on the world map, and developing them into the most distinguished and productive of all departments in the country. During his long tenure and fruitful innings of 23 years (1955-1977) as Professor and Head, he earned many laurels and was credited with several firsts; to mention a few, he was awarded the Jawaharlal Nehru, Medal of NGS (1958) and Hiroshima University Medal (1964 and 1971). He was the first geographer to be elected President of the Geology and Geography Section of the Indian Science Congress (1966-67). He had the distinction to be the first UGC National Lecturer in Geography (1971). Professor

Singh visited many countries spread over the entire world to chair technical sessions in International seminars and to deliver lectures as Visiting Professor. His contributions as Chairman of International Commission on Rural Settlements of the Monsoon Land (1968-76) and as Executive Member for two terms of Committee of the Management of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau since its inception (1968), were commendable. His tenure as Chairman, BHU Advisory Council and Vice-Chancellor of Meerut University (1980-83) were full of multi-dimensional achievements in academic and administrative fields. Professor Singh's over 100 research papers, about 3 dozen research monographs and about 60 Ph.D. dissertations completed under his supervision, covering wide ranging topics bears testimony to his proficiency and versatility in the subject.

Professor R.L. Singh had many sterling qualities of head and heart as reflected in his plain living and high thinking, earning while learning and practical approach to problems, rare courage and conviction. It is indeed difficult to bind Professor Singh's profile in words. This great personality in keeping with destiny left for his heavenly abode on 20th December 2001. Geographers the world over and the Indian geographers in particular owe a great deal to him and continue to get inspiration from his philosophy of life. Professor Singh will remain like the pole star in the galaxy of geographers. We all pray to Almighty to provide strength to the bereaved members of his family.

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